



Governing Body

312th Session, Geneva, November 2011

GB.312/INS/12

Institutional Section

INS

TWELFTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Progress on implementing the 2009 International Labour Conference resolution concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work

Overview

Summary

This paper summarizes ILO progress and challenges in implementing the 2009 ILC Conclusions concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work.

Policy implications

None.

Legal implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Decision required

Paragraph 28.

Follow-up action required

None.

Author unit

Bureau for Gender Equality (GENDER).

References to other Governing Body documents and ILO instruments

Resolution concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work.

GB.306/PV; GB.307/16/1; GB.310/17/3; GB.312/INS/3; GB.309/LILS/6.

I. Introduction

1. According to the 2009 International Labour Conference (ILC) resolution and Conclusions concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work, the Office should ensure that the Conclusions "... are implemented in a coordinated and efficient manner by the relevant programmes at headquarters and in the field. Arrangements should be put in place to monitor progress and impact adequately. In addition, progress in the follow-up to these Conclusions should be reported to the Governing Body".¹
2. Following discussion on the Office paper *Follow-up to the adoption of the resolution concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work* in November 2009, the Governing Body requested the Director-General to "take steps to give effect to the ILC Conclusions concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work in a coordinated and efficient manner at headquarters and in the field, and report regularly to the Governing Body on progress and results achieved".² In March 2010 and March 2011, the Office responded to this request with specific updates concerning progress on gender equality.³
3. This paper summarizes other results at headquarters and in the field in achieving, with ILO support, gender equality in the world of work two years on from the 2009 Conference.

II. Decent Work Agenda

Employment

4. Three national jobs scans have successfully integrated gender. In the El Salvador jobs scan, gender equality is a cross-cutting objective, and there are three expected results related to equality: legal reform concerning domestic work in the Labour Code; promoting pay equity; and implementing the National Policy for Gender Equality, which was approved in 2011. The South Africa and Indonesia jobs scans analyze gender pay gaps and include remedial strategies.
5. In 2009, the National Employers' Council in Cameroon adopted a women's entrepreneurship development action plan; this was also the case in 2011 for the Senegalese National Employers' Council. Three banks in Zambia implemented a number of recommendations of the ILO FAMOS (Female and Male Operated Small Enterprises) quality checks in 2009, and the Governor of the Central Bank agreed to undertake one this year.

¹ ILO: *Report of the Committee on Gender Equality, Provisional Record* No. 13, International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Geneva, June 2009, Conclusions, para. 58. Overall Office implementation of the Programme and Budget for 2010–11 outcomes, with gender as a cross-cutting theme, and results achieved will be reported in the biennial Programme Implementation Report in March 2012.

² GB.306/3/2.

³ GB.307/16/1 outlining the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010–15, in which the 2009 Conclusions are linked to the Programme and Budget for 2010–11 outcomes; and GB.310/17/3, paras 6–10 and Appendix III outlining equality results through participatory gender audits.

6. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, a tripartite National Women's Employment Committee⁴ was endorsed in 2011, resulting in an institutionalized forum for strategic interventions on women in the labour market. A gender equality strategy is being developed by the Ministry of Labour.
7. In El Salvador, a National Youth Employment Plan finalized in 2011 sets out the priority areas for dedicated action in favour of young women's more equal labour market participation.

Social protection

8. Countries including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Mozambique and Viet Nam have prioritized establishing a social protection floor. The Mozambique Council of Ministers approved an implementation plan for the National Basic Social Security Strategy, which extends non-contributory social security benefits.
9. In Chile, an additional solidarity "top-up" pension and pension bond for women, for each child born, to compensate for their extra care work, as well as more easily available childcare options, to facilitate women's labour market participation, have been adopted within the non-contributory old age and invalidity pension schemes.
10. Adoption of Recommendation No. 200 in 2010 provided momentum in strengthening gender-responsiveness in national HIV strategies (e.g. in China) and reducing gender-based violence and HIV infection among migrating workers and their families (e.g. in Indonesia).
11. In 2011, the Bangladeshi Cabinet approved a National Women Development Policy; in Jordan, a national tripartite committee on pay equity was launched and has commenced detailed engagement on technical issues of women's remuneration; the Indonesian Government adopted employers' guidelines on sexual harassment; and the Ministry of Labour in Lebanon is producing a multi-language domestic workers' rights guide.⁵

Social dialogue

12. In 2010, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Pan-European Council published an equality manual.⁶ Union women's committees integrated stronger anti-discrimination components into union training in Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Serbia and Ukraine. Women trade unionists developed a strategic roadmap that charts their unions' steps in francophone Africa for achieving gender equality within their structures and policies. Unions in India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam launched ratification campaigns for the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), and made policy proposals to their Governments on strengthening maternity protection.

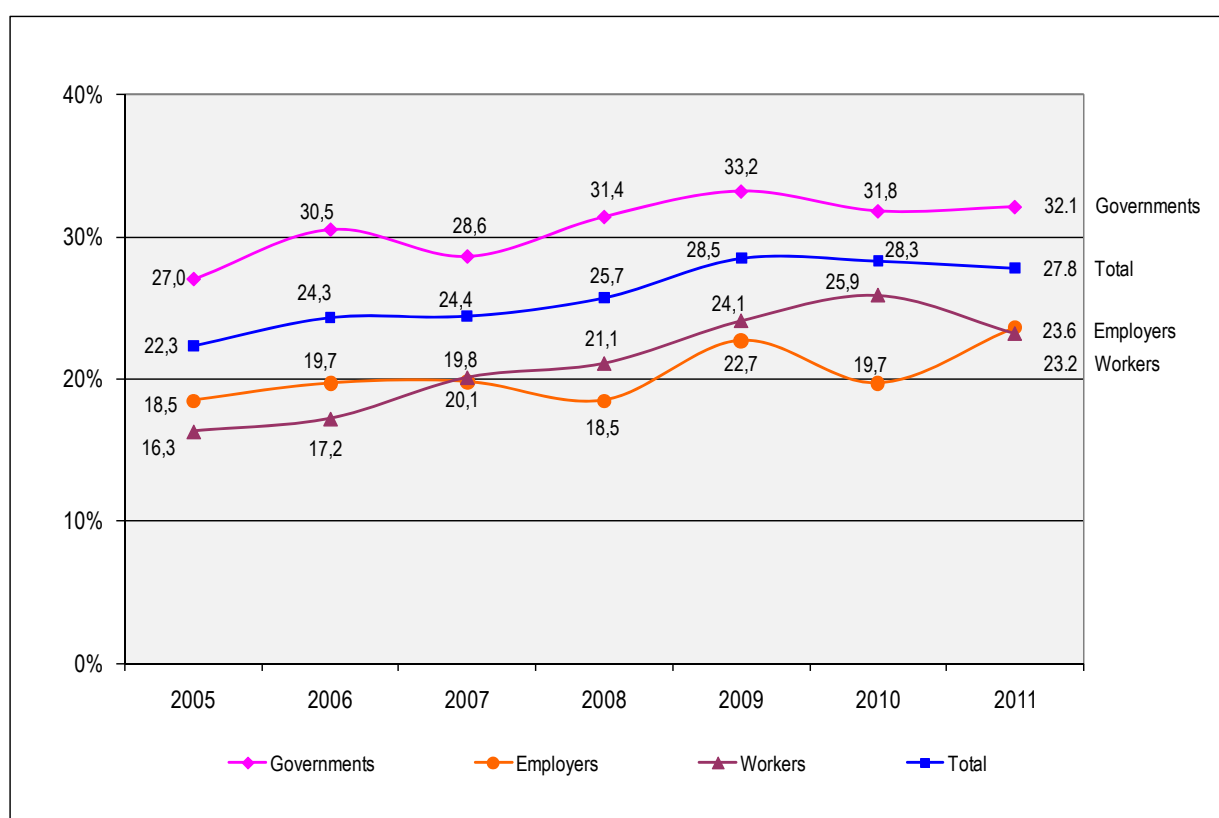
⁴ ILO: *Report of the Director-General, Appendix: The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories*, International Labour Conference, 100th Session, Geneva, 2011, para. 107.

⁵ GB.312/INS/3 provides further information on Office follow-up to the adoption of Convention No. 189 and Recommendation No. 201.

⁶ J.A. Petrovic and A. Ghinararu: *From prohibition of discrimination to promoting equality – Manual for trainers* (International Trade Union Confederation, 2009).

13. In Cambodia, about 55,000 out of a total of 320,000 workers in factories participating in the Better Work Programme learned about life skills, including tackling sexual harassment and exercising their rights to maternity protection. The factories' correct maternity benefit payments were assessed in 2010 at 55 per cent; in 2011, they had risen to 73 per cent. Garment factories, where most workers are women, are also participating in Better Work programmes in Haiti, Indonesia, Jordan, Lesotho, Nicaragua and Viet Nam.
14. An internal study commissioned in 2009 is being used by the Bangladesh Employers' Federation to help finalize its gender equality workplace policy guidelines for member enterprises. This was also the case in 2010 for the India Employers' Organization for Public Sector Enterprises. Of 79 young women in India participating in training, 76 graduated better equipped to get a job; 42 of the women also took a Start Your Own Business course, resulting in 29 of them then launching their own firms.
15. During the 98th Session (2009) of the Conference, the Director-General challenged Members' delegations to attain a level of at least 35 per cent women. At the 99th Session (2010), women comprised 28.3 per cent of delegations – and only 27.8 per cent in 2011⁷ (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Women participants (delegates, substitute delegates and advisers) at the International Labour Conference by group (2005–11)



Source: ILO: *Gender balance in the International Labour Conference. Statistics on the representation of women and men in the ILC 2005–11*, Bureau for Gender Equality (Geneva, 2011).

⁷ According to *Gender balance in the International Labour Conference – Statistics on the representation of women and men in the ILC 2005–11* (Geneva, ILO, 2011), at the 100th Session in June 2011 there were 477 women government representatives with 44 women ministers, 151 employers' representatives and 190 women workers' representatives.

Principles and rights at work

16. In 2010, Namibia ratified the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), and several countries commenced the ratification process.⁸ Cape Verde and Senegal are developing strategies for ratification of the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), and Convention No. 183. India has requested technical assistance for implementing Convention No. 100, following the June 2010 ILC Conclusions concerning its application of the Convention. In 2010, the Conference also adopted Conclusions for better implementation of the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), by the Czech Republic, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Russian Federation. In 2011, the Conference adopted Conclusions on the application of Convention No. 111 by Fiji.
17. New gender-responsive labour laws were tabled or adopted in 2010 (Comoros, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon and the Republic of Moldova).
18. In 2010, in The Hague, constituents adopted a roadmap⁹ on ending the worst forms of child labour, which calls for taking account of gender issues; extending and improving education especially for girls; and including sex-disaggregated outcomes in impact assessments and evaluations. Since 2009, national sex-disaggregated child labour surveys have been launched by Albania, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Guinea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, the Republic of Moldova, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda and Uruguay.

Cross-cutting priorities

19. Labour market challenges are reflected in the recently established indicators under the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target on decent work (MDG 1B). The global employment-to-population ratio declined from 61.7 per cent in 2007 to 61.2 per cent in 2009 and was estimated at 61.1 per cent in 2010. The indicator on vulnerable employment showed that women's rates in 2009 continued to be higher (51.8 per cent compared to 48.9 per cent for men). The MDG 3 indicator on non-agricultural paid employment showed that women's share increased from 35 per cent in 1990 to almost 40 per cent in 2009 – however the economic crisis has slowed progress.¹⁰
20. Since 2009, Austria, Brazil, the United Republic of Tanzania and Ukraine have participated in compiling gender-responsive decent work country profiles.¹¹

⁸ GB.309/LILS/6, paras 4 and 14.

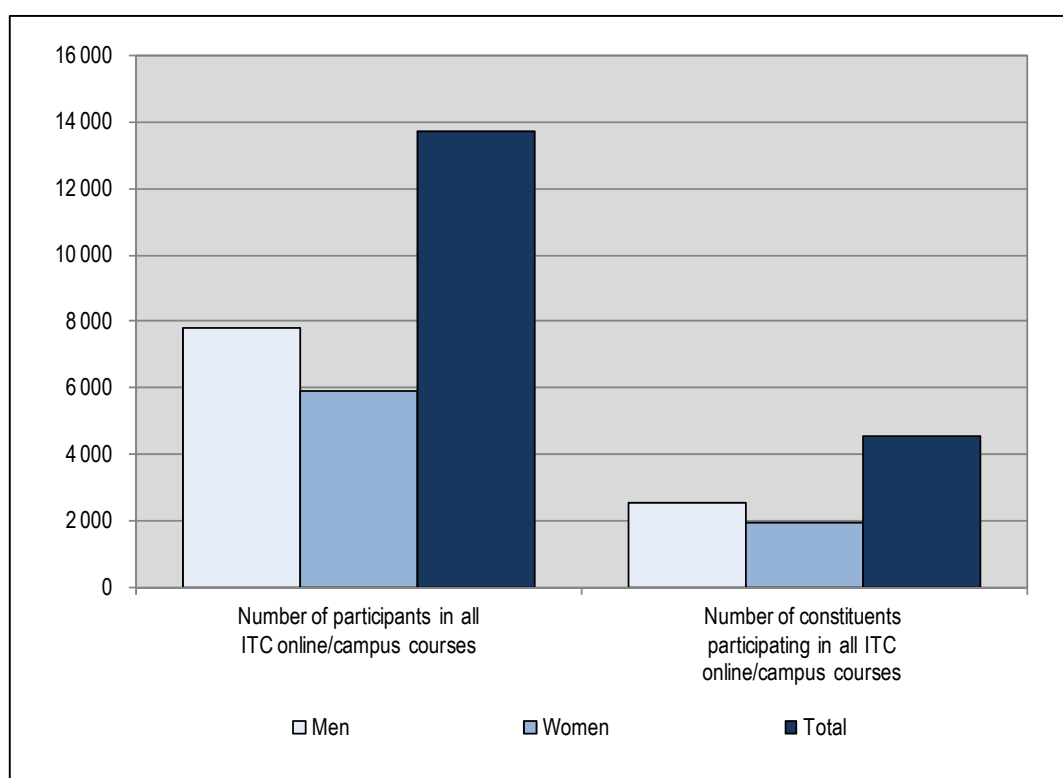
⁹ *Roadmap for achieving the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016 – Outcome Document*, The Hague Global Child Labour Conference in May 2010 on “Towards a world without child labour – Mapping the road to 2016” (The Hague, Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 2010).

¹⁰ *Global employment trends 2011. The challenge of a jobs recovery* (Geneva, ILO, 2011) and *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2011* (New York, United Nations, 2011).

¹¹ *Decent work country profile – Austria* (Geneva, ILO, 2009); *Decent work country profile – Brazil* (Geneva, ILO, 2009); *Decent work country profile – Tanzania (mainland)* (Geneva, ILO, 2010) and (only available in Ukrainian) *Decent work country profile – Ukraine* (Geneva, ILO, 2011).

21. The 2009 ILC Conclusions stressed the need to build constituents' capacity in gender mainstreaming using the International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin (Turin Centre). Throughout the last ten years it has become a hub offering a unique opportunity of gaining knowledge on gender concepts and sharing best practices. The newly designed Gender Academy (21 November–2 December 2011) consolidates this experience and will provide development professionals from all over the world an exclusive forum for discussion and a platform for sharing new experiences. The Academy's format provides an opportunity to upgrade professional knowledge, and its focus is on the "how to" with available tools and practical methods. The Turin Centre is also developing a Gender Action Plan 2012–15, which is aligned with the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010–15 and the three priority areas of the ILO gender equality policy.¹² The Centre is tracking sex-disaggregated participation in courses (see figures 2 and 3).

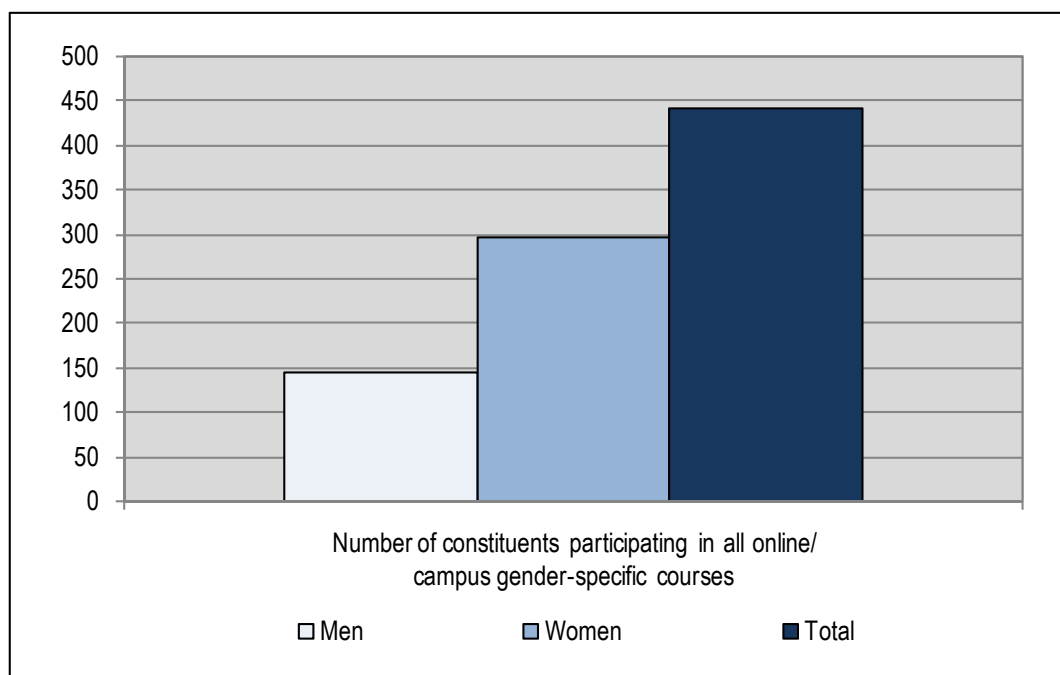
Figure 2. Female and male participants in all Turin Centre training
(January–December 2010)



Source: Turin Centre.

¹² *Gender equality and mainstreaming in the ILO*, Circular No. 564, 17 Dec. 1999, Geneva.

Figure 3. Female and male constituents participating in Turin Centre gender-specific training (same period)



Source: Turin Centre.

III. Results through partnerships

Technical cooperation

22. In 2011, under a joint ILO/EU project on gender equality, a tripartite working group of Ukraine's Parliament drafted amendments to the Law on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men, and four companies piloted by the project introduced gender equality plans. In 2010, three trade unions opened an advisory centre and gender equality hotline for workers. In 2009 and 2010, about 900 women benefited from an adapted *Start and improve your business* programme. In the seven months following the first training cycle with 519 participants, a quarter had launched their own enterprises. In 2009, the 12 project partners – tripartite constituents and the Public Employment Service and Labour Inspection Service – conducted Participatory Gender Audits.
23. Under the ILO/Norway Partnership Programme, 30 companies in Brazil developed work–family balance action plans. The Angola Parliament adopted a Bill on Domestic Violence, and the Government revised maternity protection entitlements so that women workers now have 90 days' maternity leave, breastfeeding breaks at the workplace and one extra day of annual leave for each child under 14 years. In South Africa, workshops better prepared over 30 constituents for entering into national debate on improving gender equality at work as the Ministry of Labour proposed reforming the Labour Relations Act. In India, the tripartite inter-ministerial Task Force on Promoting Gender Equality in the World of Work was instrumental in advancing a bill on sexual harassment. In China, labour laws related to the protection of women workers are under review, and the Government is developing provisions to regulate domestic service agencies.

24. Under the Sweden/ILO partnership, the Bosnia-Herzegovina National Employment Strategy 2010–14 included gender equality issues. In Indonesia, three provincial development agendas will reflect the results of a gender analysis undertaken in 2011.
25. Mainstreaming gender further in ILO's Decent Work Country Programmes guidebook and the quality assurance mechanism helped contribute to the following result: 28.5 per cent of Decent Work Country Programmes scanned in 2010 contained at least one third gender-inclusive outcome indicators – almost three times the 2008–09 estimated baseline of around 10 per cent. However, four Programmes contained no gender-inclusive indicators: one in Africa, two in Asia, and one in the Americas.

United Nations

26. When engaging with the United Nations (UN), as instructed by the 2009 ILC Conclusions, the ILO promotes policy coherence on decent work and gender equality. Among many examples in 2011 of collaboration, the ILO and the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU covers key issues of common interest, including: promoting gender equality in the Decent Work Agenda; eliminating sex discrimination, particularly the gender pay gap; protecting domestic workers; promoting social protection floors; and combating gender-based violence at work. It foresees a set of cooperation modalities, including South–South and Triangular Cooperation. The two organizations will enhance policy coherence in the area of decent work and women's economic empowerment and undertake joint advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives, research, training, skills upgrading and capacity building for constituents, among other activities. The MOU outlines a tracking system for recording joint activities and their impact on women and men within the mandates of both UN Women and the ILO. In addition, UN Women's first flagship report cited the 2009 Conclusions.¹³ References to decent work and gender equality were included in the General Assembly High-level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs Outcome Document,¹⁴ the UN Commission on the Status of Women's Agreed Conclusions of the 55th Session,¹⁵ and UN Secretary-General reports to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on gender equality.¹⁶

IV. Impacts

27. The Office has taken steps to give effect to the 2009 Conclusions concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work in a coordinated and efficient manner at headquarters and in the field, so as to have a strong effect on constituents' understanding of the issues, including through research, capacity building and information sharing.¹⁷ Although results

¹³ UN Women: *Progress of the world's women – In pursuit of justice* (New York, 2011).

¹⁴ A/65/L.1, 17 Sep. 2010.

¹⁵ UN Commission on the Status of Women: *Agreed Conclusions on access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work*, 55th Session, New York, E/2011/27, Official Records, 2011, Supplement No. 7.

¹⁶ E/2011/83, 18 April 2011; E/2011/85, 5 May 2011; E/2011/114, 11 May 2011.

¹⁷ Selected examples of gender-responsive outputs in 2009–11 are provided in GB.312/INS/12/REF on the Governing Body website.

on the ground are not always solely attributable to ILO technical support, this paper provides insights on progress achieved by tripartite constituents in transforming the vision of the 2009 Conclusions into workplace equality for women and men. Attitudes have evolved, laws and practices have improved and social partnership approaches have expanded. The continuing crisis remains a challenge. But the examples above show that the crisis has provided opportunities across the regions to promote gender equality at work, and the rights-based dividends will help strengthen families, render workplaces more productive, and reduce unrest that is fuelled by social injustice.

28. *The Governing Body may wish to request the Director-General:*

- (a) to continue to guide the Office, within the parameters of the programme and budget, in assisting constituents to implement the 2009 ILC resolution concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work; and***
- (b) to bolster Office efforts in areas where measurable progress has not been made to date.***

Geneva, 29 August 2011

Point for decision: Paragraph 28